



COMMUNICATING CHANGES IN DSHS BENEFITS

Keeping our community informed

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April 2016 Successes

- Customer Contact Center received **186,697** calls for the month of March, for cash, food, classic medical, and child care.
- 1.66% Forced disconnect calls.
- % Processed Timely or with Good Cause (goal is **95%**)
 - **Basic Food** **97.8%**
 - **Expedited BF** **97.4%**
 - **TANF** **97.0%**
 - **Medical** **93.1%**

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” Henry Ford



April 2016 Successes

- In April, the CSD HIU processed **194,423 documents with 98.6% timeliness overall**
 - 97.3% timeliness for Hotmail
 - 99.5% timeliness for File Only
- As of 1/21/16, the CSD HIU started assisting the HCS HIU with their File Only backlog that now extends back to December 2015.
 - In April, CSD processed 15,631 documents for HCS
 - We will continue to assist until they have reached their FTE potential and have staff trained to handle their current workload and backlog

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Goals and Focus Area 2016 / Community Service Division Programs



Mission

- Stated as a mission, the goal of Economic Services Administration (ESA) is to transform lives by empowering individuals and families to thrive.

Washington's Commitment

- Be the national leader in: Providing flawless food assistance, child support collection, child care, transition to work services, and disability support.



Changes in DSHS / Community Service Division Programs



New Working Family Support Program

Effective May 1, 2016, the Working Family Support program will be available to provide an additional \$10 food benefit to eligible clients who are receiving food benefits.

To be eligible household must meet the following conditions:

- Must have an active Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), state-funded Food Assistance (FAP), or Transitional Food Assistance (TFA) case;
- Cannot be receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Tribal TANF, or State Family Assistance (SFA);
- Must have a qualifying child under 18 in the home;
- Must have at least one parent working a minimum of 35 hours per week;
- Must verify work hours; and
- Household income must remain below 200% FPL.



Categorical Eligibility Income Limit for Basic Food

Effective **April 1, 2016**, the federal poverty level (FPL) standards used for categorically eligible households are increasing. The new standards are as follows:

200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines. April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017		
Persons in AU	200% of poverty guidelines Gross Monthly Income	
1	\$1,980	
2	\$2,670	
3	\$3,360	
4	\$4,050	
5	\$4,740	
Add for each person over 10 AU members: \$693		



Early Start Act

Beginning **July 1, 2016**, a family receiving child care subsidies will not longer be required to report most changes in employment, hours, or income.

- After program eligibility is established, it continues for 12 months regardless of changes in parent activity or household circumstances.
- Families will only lose eligibility if their income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income (roughly 300% FPL) or when resources exceed \$1 million.

Beginning **October 1, 2016**, a family that is over-income at reapplication will continue to be eligibility for subsidy for three months as long as their income is under 220% FPL.



Washington Connections

Effective **April 17, 2016**, Washington Connections has been upgraded. Here are some of the newest changes:

- In support of the new Working Family Support program, the Washington Connection Mid-Certification Review (MCR) Introduction page and MCR PDF was updated to match DSHS 14-467 (MCR).
- Clarifying language added to the “Next Steps” instructions on the Confirmation page for Application, Eligibility Review, Change of Circumstance and Mid Certification Review.
- Updated Error Message to provide more helpful information when Registering a Client Benefit Account (CBA).
- Added a NOTICE banner on the Login, Register with my SAW Account and Create a New User Account pages to let users know of the upcoming Secure Access Washington (SAW) Multi-Factor Authentication.
- Updates and New links added under Find Services.



Washington Connections

Washington Connection Benefit Portal will be taken off line for maintenance during the Memorial Day weekend **May 27** (6:00 PM) – **May 30** (5:00 am).

Online Tips about Information in Client Letters

- 10 most common letters are now available online with tips on each letter about critical information.
- Where to find the tips:
 - Website: **DSHS food-cash-medical**
www.dshs.wa.gov/food-cash-medical
 - Website: **What should I do when I get a letter from DSHS in the mail?** www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/client-aces-letters
 - ***Coming in 2017***, we will add to Washington Connection Homepage: *Client Benefit Account*; and *Frequently Asked Questions*.



Best time to Call or Come in CSO

First thing in the morning – 8 a.m.

- Between the 10th and the 20th of each month. This will reduce the amount of time a client will wait for services.



Clients Notified of Increase in may Food Benefits in error

IT Solutions has become aware of a situation where some clients active on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Basic Food (BF) received letters their May 2016 BF benefits were increasing in error. This was caused due to a coding error which reduced the amount of TANF monies being budgeted against the BF AU. The impacted clients letter history display the following letters which may cause some confusion.



We are hiring

We are currently hiring for Financial Service Specialist, Social Service Specialist and other job classes.

Please refer people looking for employment to:
www.careers.wa.gov.



Questions





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